

**Samantha Hand** grew up in a family where her father, both grandfathers and all of her uncles served in various branches of the military. Her earliest memories are of climbing the mesa behind her grandma's house with her dad to watch the jets do touch and go's at Webb Air force Base.

35 years later, watching jets touch and go has been augmented by participating in US Navy Welcome Home events for her husband.

As a new military spouse, Sam was challenged by a family friend to link up with the Command Family Support Group. She volunteered in a variety of capacities in family readiness groups for several years and then was asked to serve as a Navy Ombudsman. She served 10 years as an ombudsman working for 7 different commanding officers. Mrs. Hand is also an Ombudsman Trainer, and has trained over 200 volunteers for the US Navy Ombudsman program.

In her free time, Mrs. Hand has volunteered with COMPASS as a spouse mentor and the American Red Cross as a swim instructor, youth programs facilitator and disaster responder. She is currently a volunteer with Girls Inc. of South West Hampton roads teaching Lifeguarding and a Boy Scout merit badge counselor for Emergency Prep, Swimming, First Aid and Lifesaving.

Mrs. Hand works for the Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center as the Family Readiness Specialist. "I have the opportunity to talk with Sailors and Family Members every day, linking service organizations with families in need, finding ways to improve deployment transitions and coordinating the mission ombudsmen who are supporting the families of US Navy Individual Augmentees. Empowering spouses to serve in their community is the best part of the job!"